

Rock art of the world is a fascinating saga of human endeavour to translate his aesthetic sensitivity into reality. From time immemorial the early man started to record the world around him and his activities for the life sustenance and to bring forth his progenies to flourish. He lived in the natural caves and shelters which he decorated with paintings and engravings; the subject matter that he could see in nature and life around him. Rock art is known from almost all corners of the world, except Antarctica. Evidences are found from all the continents starting from the Old World i.e. Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America. Asia is the largest continent of the world and has diverse art heritage. The huge area can be divided into five regions; Central, West, East, South and Southeast Asia. In Central Asia, the two most important rock art zones are Tamgaly of Kazakhstan and Altai.



**Animals petroglyphs, Pilbara Western Australia**



**Domestic bull, Messak, Libya**

Major concentrations of petroglyphs are found from the arid regions of Saudi Arabia, Nagev Desert of Israel in West Asia. In South Asia, countries like India and Pakistan are rich in rock art heritage, so much so that Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh (India) has been inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The quantity and quality of Indian rock art can vie with the art of any of the other country.

In East Asia, China and Japan are two important countries with rich concentration of rock art. In the East and Southeast Asia, rock art sites are reported from Indonesia, Myanmar, etc. Several techniques are employed to execute rock art; like shallow carvings, scraping, pecking, finger



**Gobustan, Azerbaijan**

fluting and polishing in case of petroglyphs (engravings) while in pictographs, painting and stenciling are the major techniques. The subject matter of the rock art is also varied; starting from the simplest geometrical lines found in the Panaramittee tradition of Australia to complex geometrical designs executed



**Lascaux Cave, Dordogne, France**

by the Chumash people of California. Animals are the most favoured subjects of the early man as they were their source of life sustenance. Naturalistic representation of wild animals and hunting scenes are thus the most common subject. Possessing brute-power might have been the most desired concern to the early men and as such representations of their anthropoes (Half human and half animal features) are commonly found from the Palaeolithic period of Europe to the South African Bushman paintings.

After the introduction of domestication of plants and animals, the complexity of human life style in material culture as well as in social life was well evidenced in the diverse nature of depictions. The Anthropomorphic figures of the Coso range, California, the shamanistic representations of Texas, represen-



**Bhimlat, Bundi, Rajasthan**



**Pandavulagutta, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh**

In Uttar Pradesh, the major rock art sites are concentrated in the Robjertsganj – Sonbhadra district of the region. Located between Vindhyar Range and Kaimur Range, the area had been the centre of activities of pre-historic men which is evident from the rock paintings found in abundance in this region. These rock paintings are mostly located in the rock shelters which are up to 1 meter wide and few meters long, where mostly the jointed face (which is protected from the top by a pro-



**Deogarh, Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh**



**Lekhania, Uttar Pradesh**

While deer and elephants are the most common animals depicted in these paintings, some exotic and imaginary animals are also seen. These shelters exhibit pictographs ranging from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Early Historical period. The paintings/ drawings mostly depict the early inhabitants' common occupations like hunting, dancing, battle scenes, and rituals. These paintings have been executed on the walls as well as ceilings of the caves and shelters as such places were considered safe by the early men. These areas are even today frequented by jackals, bears etc. and occasionally leopards according to the local people.

-truding bed of thick sandstone), or the underside of this bed. The region has a number of rock art sites, namely the well known sites of *Lekhania* and *Panchmukhi*. Other sites in the region are *Murali Pahari*, *Harahi Pahar*, *Koliaghat* etc. The principle subject contained in the rock art of the area is figures of humans, animals, battle-gears etc; along with various intricate and abstract patterns.



**Channasva Pahar, Sonbhadra,**



**Kilvalai, Tamilnadu**

The present exposition 'The World of Rock Art' is culled out from the Exhibition on Rock Art organised during the International Rock Art Conference, at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi from 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 to 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2013. After getting a very positive feedback from a cross section of the society comprising; scholars, media persons, public servants and general public, it was decided to take the exhibition to other parts of the country as circulating/mobile exhibition to spread awareness among school children, college and university students and general public at large. The exhibition was earlier hosted respectively at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (5<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2013), then in Srimanta Sank-





-ardeva Kalashetra, Guwahati (12<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2013), at Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar (18<sup>th</sup> May to 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2013), at Department of History, Pondicherry University, Puducherry (25<sup>th</sup> July to 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2013), at National Gallery of Modern Arts, Bengaluru (3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2013 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014) at Center

for Heritage Studies Thripunithura, Kerala (28<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 to 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2014), at Sangeetha Mahal Palace Complex, Thanjavur, Tamilnadu (6<sup>th</sup> May-21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015) and at ASI, Puratattva Bhavan, Seminari Hills, Nagpur from 19<sup>th</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2015. An exhibition on the 'Indian Rock Art' was on display in Yinchuan City, China. The exhibition was inaugurated on the occasion of the World Rock Art Conference held from the 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2014. The exhibition remained open for public for about one year from 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2014 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.

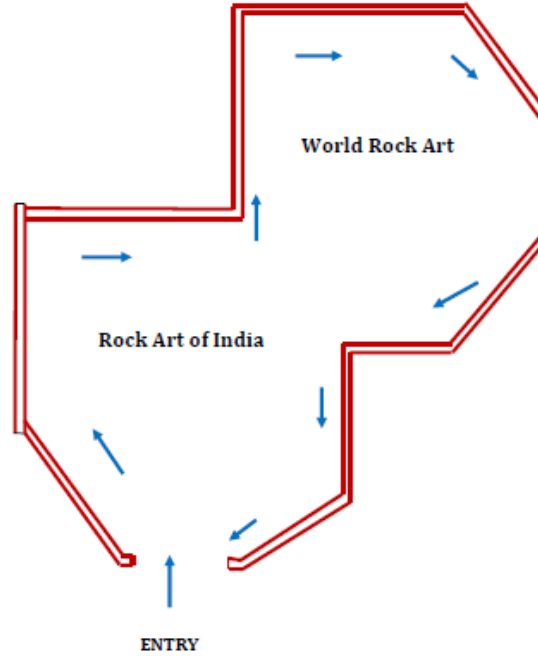


**Lekhamonda, Sundergarh, Odisha**



**Khajuri Village, Rayagada, Odisha**

For the present exhibition, exhibits are chosen from five continents of the world: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America. A representative collection of the significant and important traditions are displayed continent wise. This exhibition creates, for the viewer, a degree of experiential contact with prehistoric art. It provides the basis for entering into the changing aspects of the living arts of man. It is believed that man's awareness of the world around came through his primeval sense of sight and sound. These two senses have stimulated artists' expressions; visual and aural in the prehistoric past as well as in the contemporary cultures. The present exhibition also showcases the 'living art traditions' of three communities - the Lanjia-Sauras of Odisha, the Rathwa-Bhils of Gujarat and the Warlis of Maharashtra just to give a glimpse of continuity of artistic traditions in Indian context.



**Venue:**

**Aanchalik Vigyan Nagri (Regional Science City)  
Ekta Vihar, Sector-E (Close to multi storied building of GSI)  
Aliganj Extension, Lucknow 226024  
Uttar Pradesh**



**The World  
Rock Art**



**Exhibition**  
(26<sup>th</sup> April – 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2016)



**Organised by**  
**Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi**  
**Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India**  
**in collaboration with**  
**Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeoscience (BSIP), Lucknow**  
**and**  
**Regional Science City, Lucknow**